



**Signature Report**

**April 21, 2008**

**Motion 12737**

**Proposed No.** 2008-0218.2

**Sponsors** Patterson and Constantine

1 A MOTION adopting immediate actions to improve  
2 conditions for animals in King County's shelters, a policy  
3 framework for animal services and establishing a process  
4 for the development of a strategic plan, operational master  
5 plan, facilities master plan and business plan.

6  
7 WHEREAS, King County animal services include services provided by the  
8 Seattle-King County department of public health, King County sheriff's office and the  
9 animal care and control section of the records and licensing services division of the  
10 department of executive services, and

11 WHEREAS, Seattle-King County department of public health provides zoonotic  
12 and animal borne disease control, sanitary and health based enforcement and may inspect  
13 animal housing for compliance with public health standards, and

14 WHEREAS, the King County sheriff's office provides animal and human safety  
15 based enforcement and cruelty investigations for compliance with public safety  
16 standards, and

17           WHEREAS, the animal care and control section of the records and licensing  
18           services division of the department of executive services provides animal shelter, medical  
19           care, nuisance control, notice of order based enforcement, pet licensing, licensing for  
20           businesses and organizations that house animals, code compliance inspections and cruelty  
21           investigations, and

22           WHEREAS, K.C.C. 11.04.011 states that the purpose of King County animal care  
23           and control is to serve and maintain such levels of animal care as will protect animal and  
24           human health and safety, and to the greatest degree practicable to prevent injury to  
25           humans, property and cruelty to animal life, and

26           WHEREAS, on May 29, 2007, the council adopted Ordinance 15801 to reduce  
27           rates of euthanasia, redefine the roles and responsibilities of the animal care and control  
28           citizen's advisory committee, and reduce access to animals by individuals convicted or  
29           charged with animal cruelty, and

30           WHEREAS, K.C.C. 11.04.500, as amended by Ordinance 15801, states that King  
31           County sets maximum euthanasia rate targets to measure progress towards reducing the  
32           rates of cats and dogs euthanized by the animal care and control authority and the total  
33           number of cats and dogs euthanized by King County animal care and control is not to  
34           exceed twenty percent in the year ending December 31, 2008, and fifteen percent in the  
35           years following 2008, and

36           WHEREAS, on May 29, 2007, the council approved Motion 12521 relating to the  
37           provision of services to animals and requesting that the executive transmit a report to  
38           include recommendations to improve the humane care of animals and develop a model  
39           animal services program, and

40           WHEREAS, Motion 12521 further requested that the executive work with the  
41 animal care and control citizen's advisory committee to develop the report, and

42           WHEREAS, the animal care and control citizen's advisory committee submitted a  
43 special report dated September 24, 2007, and

44           WHEREAS, on October 8, 2007, the council approved Motion 12600 accepting  
45 the animal care and control citizen's advisory committee report and requesting that the  
46 executive take immediate steps to determine the feasibility of the recommendations  
47 identified in the report, in addition to exploring the business decision of discontinuing the  
48 provision of animal sheltering services, and declaring an urgent need for action to  
49 implement the recommendations contained within the animal care and control citizen's  
50 advisory committee report, and

51           WHEREAS, Motion 1600 states that a "no-kill" type animal services program  
52 would save all healthy and treatable cats and dogs and euthanize only those cats and dogs  
53 with severe health problems that preclude a reasonable quality of life or temperament  
54 problems that pose a threat to public safety. A "no-kill" type animal services program  
55 would permanently place animals into homes within its community and have a euthanasia  
56 rate of less than fifteen percent, and potentially as low as ten percent. This program  
57 would require an aggressive and innovative approach to achieve "no-kill" standards and  
58 draw upon the available resources in King County and reflect community values. This  
59 program should pursue grants, donations and partnerships to accomplish its objectives,  
60 and

61           WHEREAS, the executive submitted the King County Animal Care and Control  
62 2008 Operation Plan dated November 2, 2007, and

63           WHEREAS, on November 19, 2007, the council approved Ordinance 15975, the  
64           2008 budget ordinance, establishing a proviso restricting funds to the records and  
65           licensing division pending the outcome of a preliminary evaluation of the leadership,  
66           human resources and structural capacity to become a model no-kill program, and

67           WHEREAS, on March 24, 2008 the council received a preliminary evaluation of  
68           leadership, human resources and structural capacity to become a model no-kill program,  
69           and

70           WHEREAS, there is an urgent need for action to address problems identified with  
71           the animal services in King County, and

72           WHEREAS, the county is committed to reform animal services and improve the  
73           provision of animal services in King County with short-term, mid-term and long-term  
74           improvements, and

75           WHEREAS, approximately thirteen thousand animals are housed in King  
76           County's shelters each year, and

77           WHEREAS, King County employs approximately thirteen thousand employees  
78           who are known for their compassion, generosity and willingness to assist in times of  
79           need, and

80           WHEREAS, many King County employees have expressed interest in adopting or  
81           helping to locate homes for animals in King County's shelters, and

82           WHEREAS, a recent report by U.C. Davis highlighted a health crisis at King  
83           County's shelters, and

84           WHEREAS, veterinarians and rescue groups have expressed interest in providing  
85           medical care and housing of animals at King County's shelters;

86 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

87 It is the intent of the county to implement short-term, mid-term and long-term  
88 improvements to animal services. These improvements shall include immediate actions  
89 concurrent with the development of a strategic planning framework to affect reforms of  
90 King County animal services as follows:

91 A. The county will immediately cooperate and collaborate with veterinarians for  
92 pro-bono services to triage the current shelter health crisis.

93 B. The county will immediately engage in an aggressive adoption outreach  
94 program to include King County employees, local businesses and rescue groups to  
95 significantly reduce the number of animals in King County's shelters.

96 C. It is the intent of the county that the following vision, mission, guiding  
97 principles and goals for King County animal services be the foundation for the strategic  
98 planning efforts for animal services:

99 1. Vision: King County ensures humane treatment of animals and protects the  
100 health and safety of the public;

101 2. Mission: King County protects the public health from animal borne and  
102 zoonotic disease, keeps the public safe from animals and nuisances, prevents animal  
103 cruelty, reduces the number of homeless animals entering shelters, increases pet  
104 adoptions and seeks to eliminate euthanasia of healthy or treatable animals;

105 3. Guiding Principles:

106 a. The public has the right to be safe from animals and animal borne and  
107 zoonotic disease and to avoid animal nuisances;

108 b. All animals shall be treated humanely;

109                   c. Animal services shall be coordinated and integrated with other services and  
110 programs as appropriate;

111                   d. The county's animal services programs shall be accountable and transparent  
112 to the public;

113                   e. The quality of animal services shall be continuously improved; and

114                   f. Animal services shall be provided in a fiscally responsible and sustainable  
115 manner.

116                   4. Goals:

117                   a. Protect the public's health and safety from zoonotic and animal borne  
118 disease through effective public health programs;

119                   b. Ensure access to life saving programs including adoption, medical care,  
120 socialization and behavioral modification;

121                   c. Reduce the number of homeless pets through the provision of low-cost,  
122 high-volume spay and neuter services, pet retention education and participation in a feral  
123 cat trap neuter return and release program;

124                   d. Achieve a euthanasia no greater than fifteen percent by the end of 2009 and  
125 euthanize only those animals that are vicious, untreatable or irreparably suffering;

126                   e. Actively pursue animal cruelty investigations;

127                   f. Create and support the growth of strong county partnerships with  
128 volunteers, fosters, rescue groups and stakeholders and the media;

129                   D. A King County interbranch animal services work group is hereby created with  
130 the purpose of reforming King County animal services.

131           1. Responsibilities: The King County interbranch animal services work group  
132 shall develop the King County animal services strategic plan, operational master plan and  
133 facilities master plan for the three-year period 2009 through 2011;

134           2. Membership: The King County interbranch animal services work group shall  
135 be co-chaired by the directors of the office of management and budget and county council  
136 policy staff, or their designees. The King County interbranch animal services work group  
137 shall include the directors of the office of management and budget, county council policy  
138 staff, department of executive services, Seattle-King County department of public health,  
139 the King County sheriff and the King County prosecutor, or their designees.

140           3. Staff Liaison: The office of management and budget shall designate a staff  
141 liaison to the King County interbranch animal services work group who shall be  
142 responsible, at a minimum, for assisting the work group in developing the strategic,  
143 operational and master plans, writing and producing drafts and the final strategic,  
144 operational and master plans, organizing the meetings, sending meeting agendas in  
145 advance of the meeting to members, taking minutes of the minutes and distributing the  
146 minutes to members.

147           E. The interbranch animal services work group shall convene a community  
148 stakeholder group to review and provide recommendations to the county executive and  
149 council on the King County animal services strategic plan, operational master plan and  
150 facilities master plan for the three-year period 2009 through 2011. The community  
151 stakeholder group's review shall be provided before the county executive transmits the  
152 strategic plan, operational master plan and facilities master plan for the three-year period  
153 2009 through 2011 to the county council for its review and possible adoption.

154 F. Strategic Plan: A King County animal services strategic plan for the three-year  
155 period 2009 through 2011 shall be developed by the King County interbranch animal  
156 services work group. The plan shall be transmitted by the county executive to the county  
157 council by ordinance on or before August 15, 2008. Annual updates to the strategic plan,  
158 including annual performance measures shall be reported to council by motion by May 1.  
159 The strategic plan shall include the following components:

160 1. Regulatory and policy framework for regional and local provision of animal  
161 services. And within local provision of services, what services are mandated and  
162 discretionary;

163 2. Vision and mission statements;

164 3. Prioritized medium- and long-range goals;

165 4. Priority outcomes relative for each goal with a primary department  
166 accountable to achieve each goal; and

167 5. Performance measures for each goal with a primary department accountable  
168 for improvement of each performance measure.

169 G. Operational Master Plan: A King County animal services operational master  
170 plan for the three-year period 2009 through 2011 shall be developed by the King County  
171 interbranch animal services work group. The plan shall be transmitted by the county  
172 executive to the county council by ordinance on or before August 15, 2008. The  
173 operational master plan shall be based on the strategic plan and shall include the  
174 following components:

175 1. Organizational and financial evaluation of the strategic plan on how regional  
176 and local animal services should be provided or contracted for by King County;



177                   2. Organizational and financial evaluation of the strategic plan on how King  
178 County should provide, or contract for, animal services in King County unincorporated  
179 areas and cities and towns;

180                   3. Development of, at a minimum, the following organizational options for how  
181 King County animal services strategic plan for the three-year period 2009 through 2011  
182 can be implemented:

183                   a. Status quo option. King County continues to provide regional and local  
184 unincorporated and incorporated animal services as currently organized within the  
185 departments of public health and executive services and the sheriff's office;

186                   b. Reorganize animal services within county government.

187                   c. Reorganize animal services in partnership with King County and partners.

188                   H. Facilities Master Plan: A King County animal services facilities master plan  
189 for the three-year period 2009 through 2011 shall be developed by the King County  
190 interbranch animal services work group. The facilities master plan shall be transmitted to  
191 council by the county executive by August 15, 2008, by ordinance. The facilities master  
192 plan shall be based on the operational master plan and shall include the following  
193 components:

194                   1. An inventory of existing animal services capital facilities, showing the  
195 locations and capacities of the facilities;

196                   2. A forecast of the future needs for such capital facilities, proposed location or  
197 locations and capacities of expanded or new capital facilities; and

198                   3. At least a six-year plan that will finance such capital facilities within  
199 projected funding capacities and clearly identifies sources of public money for such  
200 purposes.

201                   I. Business Plans: The proposed 2009 business plans for the departments of  
202 executive services, Seattle-King County department of public health and the King County  
203 sheriff, shall be updated upon adoption of the animal services strategic plan and shall be  
204 coordinated and integrated with the proposed 2009 King County budget.  
205

Motion 12737 was introduced on 4/14/2008 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 4/21/2008, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Ms. Patterson, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Constantine, Ms. Lambert, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Gossett, Mr. Phillips and Ms. Hague

No: 0

Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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ATTEST:

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